

# Revolutionary War

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## Postscripts

by Jack Post

On this pleasant April morning as his horse jogged easily under him on the Bay Path (a cart track now, no longer an Indian trail), George Partridge was thinking of yesterday's drill on the training field. The firearms that he and Ichabod Crane and William Thomas had finally been able to buy with the 60 pounds that Duxbury had voted in January made the militiamen look almost professional, not quite like the red-coated regulars of the Queen's Guards stationed at Marshfield to protect the handful of Tories there, but soldiers enough to take care of themselves if the need arose; and that might come very soon now.

George Partridge was riding up to the re-convened meeting of the Second Provincial Congress. Duxbury had elected him in January, he had attended the sessions in Cambridge in February, and later those in March and early April which Sam Adams had prudently called in Concord, further away from the threatening British garrison in Boston. Now it was mid-April, and George was heading back again after a hasty return to Duxbury to brief his fellow townsmen on the rumors that the British would soon, now that spring was here, foray into the countryside to seize arms and ammunition.

That would mean trouble, George Partridge knew. The Provincials were in no mood to endure further British indignities, and would certainly resist. All over New England militia companies had been gathering and drilling. Only last month a squad of those regulars stationed at Marshfield had marched over to Duxbury one Sabbath morning and had peered into the windows of the meeting house. The women had screamed, and the men, many of whom had been drilling only the day before, had thought for certain they were about to be attacked. But the young British captain had laughed scornfully at the confusion, and had marched his men back toward Green Harbor, leaving the Duxbury citizens seething.

Even if the King should wish it, it had passed the point where reconciliation would be easy, George Partridge thought. Here we were, all Englishmen, ready to leap at each other's throats, not strange, really, when you remembered that our ancestors had come over to Plymouth or the Bay Colony seeking the very same freedom that is so dear to us and to every Englishman. That was a long century and a half ago, but we descendants of those settlers feel just the same in this year of Our Lord 1775 as they did in 1630. Why could not the King and the Parliament understand that?

The quickest way to Concord would be directly up the postroad, almost to the fens of Boston, then around the Back Bay and across the Great Bridge into Cambridge, then on to Menotomy; but first he would have to rest his horse, and get some food for himself, too. He let his mind dwell pleasantly on the tankard of cool ale that would be waiting at the tavern in Roxbury. He could pick up the latest news

there, before he rode into the territory where British patrols might be stopping travelers.

The stableboy at the tavern seemed slow in coming for his horse, which irked George somewhat, for he was hot and thirsty. When he ran out, the boy apologized. An express rider had just galloped in from Cambridge and was now within, with tidings of the British march toward Lexington and Concord. George rushed in and forced himself into the knot of men, catching scraps of words - 8 citizens shot on the green at Lexington, houses burned, redcoats marching on towards Concord, Sam Adams and John Hancock escaping just in time from the Clark house where Hancock's fiancée and his aunt were staying. Will Dawes and Paul Revere had roused the countryside, Dawes over the Boston neck and right by this tavern in the early dawn, and Revere from Charlestown on a signal from the steeple of the Old North Church. Out through the country towns, bells were tolling and signal guns firing to arouse the patriots.

George Partridge considered what he should do. He could scarcely go on to Concord, and the menacing band of redcoats at Marshfield must be taken care of. He would hasten home and alert Duxbury, together with Kingston, Plymouth, Rochester and Plympton and the rest. If enough militia companies could be marched quickly to Marshfield, perhaps the 100 regulars there could be stopped before any damage was done. Perhaps they might even be captured! George had heard enough. Speed was important now, and action! He forced his way through the ever-increasing crowd, demanded his horse from the gaping stableboy and set out for Duxbury.